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NEWS RELEASE

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North Providence High School English Teacher Wins \$25,000 Milken Educator Award

NORTH PROVIDENCE – The chair of the English Department at North Providence High School, Janine Napolitano, was named today (October 15, 2007) as the Rhode Island recipient of a Milken Family Foundation 2007 National Educator Award.

Ms. Napolitano has been an English teacher since 1995 and has taught in North Providence High School for the past seven years. A graduate of Rhode Island College and a resident of North Providence, she is an executive board member of the Rhode Island Writing Project and a cofounder and cochair of the high-school Literacy Team. She was selected by the State Council of Teachers of English as the Rhode Island English Teacher of the Year.

Her master's thesis (at RIC) was on the subject of "teaching reluctant learners." She has published a professional research article, "Hearing Voices," on the effective use of journals in the English classroom.

"Janine believes in setting high standards and she challenges her students," said Governor Donald L. Carcieri, in presenting the award to Ms. Napolitano. "She is known for implementing innovative teaching methodologies and has a passion for helping all students achieve. Janine sets a positive example for all to follow. I also want to commend Janine for serving on the senior-project committee. Senior projects will form a critical part of the new high-school graduation requirements."

"Janine Napolitano is known in this school and around the state for her capacity to get students of all ability levels to read well and to write effectively," said Robert G. Flanders, Jr., Esq., Chairman of the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education. "She is one of the reasons why the English test scores in North Providence High School have been steadily improving. Her work, in which she focuses on reaching out to reluctant readers, should be an inspiration to high-school educators throughout the state."

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“As a mentor to aspiring teachers at RIC and Providence College and to novice teachers at North Providence High, Janine Napolitano is helping to build a statewide culture of literacy,” said Peter McWalters, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. “She created an interdisciplinary literacy team at the high school and she built a partnership between the school and the Rhode Island Writing Project – because she understands that all educators, not just English teachers, must teach student literacy. I am pleased that her work, which is always focused on the needs of her students, has been honored today by the Milken Family Foundation.”

The award, which comes with an unrestricted payment of \$25,000, honors exceptional educators for their work. Each recipient receives the award in a surprise ceremony; educators do not apply for the award, nor are they aware that they have been nominated for the honor.

Up to 80 educators around the country will receive Milken Family Foundation 2007 National Educator Awards this month. The program has been administered in Rhode Island since 1990, and there have been 66 Milken Award winners so far in the state.